(d) and (e) The table above indicates increasing pattern in the Central assistance provided to the State since creation of the State in 2000-01. The assistance is subject to availability and utilisation of funds. Besides, the State share for North Eastern region, Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal has been reduced during 2004-05 to ten per cent from the earlier 25 per cent under the Integrated Forest Protection Scheme.

Threat to wildlife habitat

923. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently some 40 wildlife organizations and environmentalists have represented to Government that the threat to wildlife habitats in the country is on the increase;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken to protect India's wildlife?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Forest land and wildlife habitat are protected by various laws including the Indian Forest Act, 1927, the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, and the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. All cases of diversion and use of forest as well as wildlife habitats for non forestry purposes are regulated under the provisions of these laws and the orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court issued from time to time. The cases are examined by the expert committees and decisions are taken after due consideration of laws and policies of the Government as well as the directives of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

Mount Everest on danger list

924. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that conservationists have asked the UN to place Mount Everest on a danger list because its snow-cover is retreating rapidly; and